GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
ABSTRACT

Public Services – Registration & Stamps Department – Allegation of tearing and tampering of records against the staff working in Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry – disciplinary proceedings initiated against Smt.K.Vijayamani, Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry among certain others - Regular enquiry conducted – charges proved – Enquiry report communicated – Representation submitted – Imposing the penalty of stoppage of three annual grade increments with cumulative effect – Orders – Issued.

REVENUE (VIGILANCE-II) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Rt.No.959 **Dated:14-09-2017**

Read the following:

1. DR, R&S, Rajahmundry Lr.No.G1/368/2014, dt:30-5-2014.
2. DIG, R&S, Kakinada Lr.No.X/388/2014, dt:9-12-2014 & dt:30-9-2015.
3. DIG, R&S, Kakinada Charge Memo.No.X/388/2014-4, dt:18-11-2014.
4. WSD of Smt.K.Vijayamani, JSR-I dt:17-12-2014.
5. G.O.Rt.No.1211, Rev (Vig.II) Deptt., dt:27-11-2015.
6. G.O.Rt.No.1212, Rev (Vig.II) Deptt., dt:27-11-2015.
7. G.O.Rt.No.1328, Rev (Vig.II) Deptt., dt:31-12-2015.
8. DIG, R&S, Kakinada Lr.No.X/388/2014-2, dt:1-10-2016.
9. Govt., Memo.No.36555/Vig.II(1)/2014-5, dt:10-1-2017.
10. Representation of the CO Smt.K.Vijayamani, JSR-I,dt:19-2-2017.
11. Govt., Lr.No.36555/Vig.II(1)/2014-6, dt:13-6-2017.
12. APPSC Lr.No.511/DC&C/1/2017, dt:12-7-2017.

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ORDER:

Whereas, in the reference 2nd read above, the Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada has brought to the notice of the Government that certain officials of Registration & Stamps department who worked previously in the Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry from 2011 onwards were involved in tearing and tampering of records in Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry.

2. And whereas, in the reference 3rd read above, the Disciplinary Authority i.e., the Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada has initiated disciplinary proceedings against Smt.K.Vijayamani, Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry duly framing the following charge among certain others.

Charge-I: That you Smt.K.Vijayamani, while working as Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry committed grave misconduct in as much as she failed to safeguard and preserve the records of the office.

The Preliminary Enquiry Officer has reported that one Sri Addepalli Chenna Kesava, S/o. late Nageswara Rao, R/o. Rajahumdry alleged that the Registrar Office, Rajahmundry issued copies of three fake documents with Doc. Nos.5093/1974 dt.30.12.1974; 6088/1979 dt.24.12.1979 and 6149/1979 dt.28.12.1979 claiming that the property was purchased by one Sri Tadi Sura Reddy and who in turn sold the property to Sri Nallamilli Venkata Reddy and Padala Venakata Reddy.

On verification by the Preliminary Enquiry Officer, it was reported that in the Thumb impression Register certain pages were torn out apart from other relevant records, found as hereunder.

Torn out pages in Thumb impression register:

Vol.No.392 - Page No.4 to 21.
Vol.No.359 – Page Nos.115 and 116.

Contd.2.

That as per the instructions in vogue, the Thumb impression Registers shall be maintained in locked record receptacles of the registering officer under lock and key and she is solely responsible vide S.O.1111.

Thus, she acted in a manner which is unbecoming of Government servant and thereby contravened the provisions of Andhra Pradesh Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964.

Charge-II:

That you Smt.K.Vijayamani, the then Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch) and presently Sub Registrar, Allavaram has committed grave misconduct in as much as she has failed to safeguard and preserve the records of the office. On verification of the enquiry by the Preliminary enquiry officer, it was found that;

That on a complaint received from one Sri Addepalli Chenna Kesava, S/o Late Nageswara Rao, R/o Rajahmundry alleging that the Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry issued copies of three fake documents, verification of the records was made by the Preliminary enquiry officer and the following fraudulent act was found, for which the registering officer is individual and jointly responsible for safe custody of the records and record room vide S.O 1112 and 1113 (i).

Torn out and replacement with fake pages in Book-I:

Volume No.1247 – Pages 65 to 73 (3 sheets)
Page No.47 to 64.

Apart from the above, the relevant pages in index I & II were also torn out in order to disappearance of evidence. Verification of the D-Account Registrar discloses the following details with regard to movement of the relevant Volumes of Book-I:

S.No	Date of taking the relevant volume for preparing C.C.	S.No. & C.No.	Doc. No. meant for C.C.	Volume No
1	22.3.2011	1532/11 & 1463/11	5093/74	1247
2	5.6.2013	3575/13 & 3508/13	5093/74	1247
3	5.6.2013	3576/13 & 3509/13	6088/79	1427
4	5.6.2013	3577/13 & 3510/13	6149/79	1433
5	7.6.2013	3636/13 & 3569/13	6088/79	1427
6	7.6.2013	3637/13 & 3568/13	5093/74	1247
7	10.6.2013	3662/13 & 3593/13	6149/79	1433
8	28.2.2014	232/14 & 1427/14	6149/79	1433
9	28.2.2014	233/14 & 1428/14	6088/79	1247

Thus, she acted in a manner which is unbecoming of Government Servant and thereby contravened the provisions of Andhra Pradesh Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964.

Charge-III: That you Smt.K.Vijayamani, while working as Joint Sub Registrar-I at Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry committed grave misconduct in as much as she failed to discharge her duties in examining the record receptacles and also failed to supervise the proper upkeep and maintenance of various statutory registers like Record Issue Register, Dusting Register etc., required to be maintained as envisaged in the Standing Orders No.1153, 1154, 1157 and 1158.

Such a lapse was observed by the Preliminary enquiry officer during the preliminary enquiry conducted by him in connection with the tampering of official records involving tearing and replacement with fake sheets., etc., On account of such gross negligence committed by Smt.K.Vijayamani, the task of identifying the culprit(S) indulged in the above offence has become very difficult, for which Smt.K.Vijayamani is squarely responsible.

Contd.3.

Thus, she acted in a manner which is unbecoming of Government Servant and thereby contravened the provisions of Andhra Pradesh Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964.

3. The Charged Officer submitted Written Statement of Defence in the reference 4th read above. Due to involvement of certain Retired officials along with in service officials, the Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada has sent proposals for conducting common enquiry as all of them were involved in common irregularity vide reference 2nd read above.

4. And whereas, in the reference 5th read above, Government have ordered for common enquiry against all the 25 Registration officials who were commonly involved in the allegation of tearing and tampering of records in the Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry.

5. In the refrences 6th & 7th read above, Government have appointed Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada as Inquiring Authority and District Registrar, Registration & Stamps, Machilipatnam as Presenting Officer.

6. The Inquiring Authority in the reference 8th read above has furnished the Inquiring report wherein he as held that all the three charges framed against Smt.K.Vijayamani, Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry were held proved.

7. Government have examined the matter and in the reference 9th read above, communicated a copy of report to the the Charged Officer for submitting her representation if any on the findings of Inquiring Authority.

8. And whereas, in the reference 10th read above, the Charged Officer submitted representation stating among others that there is no logic in any of the charges framed against her, particularly when the probable period of occurrence of such tampering was indulged, could not be identified. She has further stated that the Preliminary Enquiry Officer or the Regular Enquiry Officer could find out as to when such unfortunate incident regarding tampering / disappearance of the official record, actually occurred whereas the registration of the documents, in question, occurred as early as in 1974 and 1979 until the incident came to lime light in March, 2014, i.e., after a lapse of more than 35 years. In this long span of 35 years, several officers and staff happened to work in the office. She has further stated that without pin pointing the specific period or probable period of such occurrence, it is not correct to pin point or frame charge against a specific officer. She worked in the Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry from 08.11.2010 to 13.09.2014 and stated that even the Preliminary Enquiry Officer has made clear-cut observation stating that it is very difficult to pin point against any individual. When such fixing of responsibility or fixing the probable period of occurrence of unfortunate incident, was not done by the Preliminary Enquiry Officer, no contradictory conclusion can be arrived at by the Regular Enquiry Officer. She has further stated that the keys of the record receptacles shall be in the custody of the Record Keeper and the keys of the Record Room are in the safe custody of the Joint Sub Registrar-I. Record Keeper is solely responsible for safeguarding the maintenance of the old records. She has also stated that the Joint Sub Registrar-I sits in his / her working place deeply engaged to look after the crucial job of registrations relating to the registration public, whereas the Location of the Record Room is at different place, it is practically impossible to keep a close watch on minute to minute basis on the movements happeining in the Record Room. Therefore, she has stated that it is just and essential to order for a detailed and fool-proof enquiry into the case instead of coming to a unilatereal conclusion based on assumptions, presumptions and mere surmises without any logic or truth therein, else it would be fatal to the innocent officials.

Contd.4.

9. Government after careful examination of the matter and keeping in view the findings of the Inquiring Authority observed with regard to Charge-I that it is clearly mentioned in S.O.1111 that the Joint Sub Registrar-I is individually responsible for the safe custody of records in the office and stated that her failure in safe guarding the records led tampering of valuable records which ultimately shakes the confidence of the registering public reposed in the department. As regards Charge-II, it is observed that it is clearly mentioned in S.O.554 that the completed volumes of thumb impression registers shall be maintained in Locked respecticles containing the completed register volumes and observed that had she strictly followed these instructions, the thumb impression registers would not have been tampered with. It is further observed that preservation of thumb impression registers is the prime duty of the Joint Sub Registrar-I which she failed. And as regards Charge-III, it is observed that the Charged Officer failed to supervise the maintainence of Record Issue Register which is intended to note the records while taking the returning and also observed that the maintenance of other records such as Dusting Register etc., was neglected. It is further observed that registration of huge number of documents does not absolve her from the other duties.

10. After careful consideration of the matter it has been provisionally decided to impose a penalty of stoppage of three annual grade increments with cumulative effect against Smt.K.Vijayamani, Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry and sought for concurrence of Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission in the reference 11th read above.

11. And whereas in the reference 12th read above, the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission have agreed with the proposal of the Government. (copy enclosed to the Charged Officer).

12. Accordingly, Government, hereby impose a penalty of stoppage of three annual grade increments with cumulative effect against Smt.K.Vijayamani, Joint Sub Registrar-I, Registrar Office (Original Branch), Rajahmundry.

13. The Director & Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Andhra Pradesh and Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada shall take necessary action in the matter accordingly.

(BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH)

Dr.D.SAMBASIVA RAO
SPECIAL CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT (CT, EXCISE & R&S)

To
The Director & Inspector General, Registration & Stamps,
Andhra Pradesh, Eedupugallu, Vijayawada, Krishna District.
The Deputy Inspector General, Registration & Stamps, Kakinada.
The Individual (w.e) (through the Deputy Inspector General,
Registration & Stamps, Kakinada with a request to serve the order on the individual and furnish the served copy along with dated acknowledgement to Government for record).

Copy to:
The Secretary to the Vigilance Commissioner,
Andhra Pradesh Vigilance Commission, Velagapudi, Andhra Pradesh,Secretariat,Guntur District.
The Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission, Hyderabad.
SF / SC.

//FORWARDED:: BY ORDER//

SECTION OFFICER